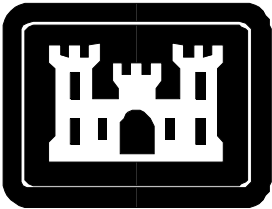




Place
Stamp
Here



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Charleston District

U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, CHARLESTON
CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 919
CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29402-0919
OFFICIAL BUSINESS
IF NOT DELIVERED IN TEN DAYS, RETURN TO SENDER



U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
CHARLESTON DISTRICT

NEWSLETTER

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
FOR THE PROPOSED
DANIEL ISLAND MARINE TERMINAL

Issue No. 1 - May 1998

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

This newsletter is the first in a series intended to provide periodic updates on the progress of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Daniel Island Marine Terminal project. Specifically, this newsletter is an important part of the existing public information program designed to keep affected and interested parties informed about the project.

To provide a better understanding of the project, this issue focuses on the background of the project and describes the types of Federal and State approvals necessary. In addition, this issue contains an overview of the EIS process and the impact categories to be examined. This newsletter concludes with a summary of the public information program.

We hope this newsletter is informative and useful to you. Thank you for your interest in the Daniel Island EIS.

PROJECT BACKGROUND
AND DESCRIPTION

The South Carolina State Ports Authority has proposed to develop a marine cargo terminal complex at Daniel Island in the city of Charleston, SC. The proposed complex would include the following components:

- Approximately 1,300 acres of port terminal development at the south end of Daniel Island for cargo marshaling, processing, and handling facilities; intermodal rail facilities; and related terminal operating facilities;
- Approximately 7,000 feet of wharf and berthing area on the Cooper River and approximately

5,000 feet of wharf and berthing area on the Wando River;

- Approximately 35 acres of dredged berthing area;
- Associated improvements to the Wando River, Hog Island, and Drum Island reaches of the navigation system;
- Approximately 2.5 miles of multi-lane roadway construction between the proposed terminal site and I-526;
- Approximately 11 miles of rail connecting the proposed terminal facilities to the East Cooper and Berkeley Railroad; and
- A rail bridge and road bridge over Beresford Creek.

Development of the proposed project would require a number of approvals by both Federal and State agencies. Federal approvals must include the following:

- The Department of the Army permit (issued by the Corps of Engineers) pursuant to Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act, Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, and Section 103 of the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act;
- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency must approve material for disposal at the Charleston Ocean Dredged Material Disposal Site under Section 103 of the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act and must review any permit proposed for issuance by the Corps under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act;

- The U.S. Coast Guard must approve a permit for the construction of two bridges (rail and vehicular) over Beresford Creek under Section 9 of the Rivers and Harbors Act; and
- The U.S. Forest Service must authorize the construction of a rail line over property within the Francis Marion National Forest.
- The Surface Transportation Board must approve, or issue an exemption for, the construction of the rail line itself.

State approvals must include certification by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, Office of Environmental Quality Control that the proposed project will not contravene State water quality standards. The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management must issue a State Critical Area permit and Coastal Zone Management Program Consistency Certification.

THE EIS PROCESS

Due to the potential for impacts to the human and natural environment associated with this project, the Corps of Engineers has determined that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) should be prepared to assist them in reaching decisions regarding the proposed project.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Charleston District, is the lead agency in the preparation of the EIS for the project. The other listed Federal agencies are cooperating agencies for this EIS. The primary law guiding the EIS process is the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This law requires all Federal agencies to give full consideration to the environmental implications of a proposed Federal action.

An EIS is a comprehensive document that discloses the potential environmental impacts of a proposed project and the Federal actions which may be taken in regard to that project. It contains information regarding the existing environmental conditions in the project area, as well as an evaluation of both the adverse and beneficial environmental impacts of a proposed project. The EIS also provides information about measures to minimize or eliminate potential environmental impacts associated with the project.

An EIS in itself is not a permit or a decision document. Federal agencies must prepare a separate Record of Decision following the completion of a Final EIS. Major components of the EIS process include:

- Define the Purpose of and Need for the Project;
- Determine the Scope of Issues to be Addressed in the EIS;
- Identify the Reasonable Alternatives to be Fully Evaluated;
- Identify the Environmental Baseline (or existing conditions) to be Evaluated;
- Evaluate the Potential Impacts of the Alternatives;
- Develop Potential Mitigation Measures;
- Prepare the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS);
- Provide Public and Agency Review;
- Conduct Public Hearing;
- Prepare the Final Environmental Impact Statement, Including Responses to Comments on the DEIS; and
- Issue the Record of Decision.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Public Workshop
September 1, 1998

Draft EIS
October 1998

Public Hearing
December 1998

Final EIS
May 1999

See page 5 of this newsletter for details on the September 1 Public Workshop

Of particular interest to this EIS are potential impacts to the red-cockaded woodpecker and flatwoods salamander, along with potential impacts to several protected plant species.

THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

An important aspect of this study is the public involvement process. As part of this process, several meetings and forums have been held, and more are scheduled to be held at key intervals in the study.

The Scoping meeting for this study was held in June 1997. The purpose of this meeting was to determine the scope of issues to be addressed in the EIS. Since that time, three public information forums were held in September 1997, December 1997, and March 1998. In addition, one community outreach meeting was held in the Cainhoy/Wando area.

Two additional public information workshops are planned. The next workshop, scheduled for September 1, 1998, at the Omar Temple in Mount Pleasant, will address the anticipated project impacts and potential mitigation measures. This workshop will be held in the evening to increase public participation and will follow an informal format to allow more one-on-one interaction. Additional community outreach programs will also be held.

The final public information workshop will be held in conjunction with the public hearing and is expected to occur in December 1998.

Prior to the next public information workshop, additional newsletters will be published to announce upcoming meetings and provide project updates. A web page for the project will also be developed over the next month. It will be available through the Corps web site at:

<http://www.sac.usace.army.mil>.

PUBLIC WORKSHOP

- | | |
|--------|--|
| When? | September 1, 1998
5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. |
| Where? | Omar Temple,
Mount Pleasant |
| Why? | To address anticipated project impacts and potential mitigation measures |
| Who? | All interested parties are welcome to attend |

Thank you for your interest in the Daniel Island project. If you have further questions, please contact:

Ms. Tina Hadden, Project Manager
CESAC-CO-P
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Charleston District
334 Meeting Street
Charleston, SC 29403

Phone: (843) 727-4613

Alternatives - Continued from Page 3

The Corps of Engineers has identified an additional 17 alternative routes to connect the SCSPA property on Daniel Island with existing rail facilities. One route would cross the Cooper River adjacent to I-526 and join rail serving the oil terminals and the Westvaco facility. The 16 remaining alternative routes would follow various combinations for four basic corridors extending from the SCSPA property across Daniel Island, Thomas Island, and the Cainhoy Peninsula to the EC&B line. All of the rail corridors are shown on the map inside this newsletter. All of these alternatives will be evaluated in the EIS.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT CATEGORIES

A list of 23 categories of potential impacts has been identified for the proposed Daniel Island marine terminal. This list has increased in response to comments received as part of the ongoing public information program for the project. The 23 key issues being evaluated in the EIS are as follows:

- Land Use
 - Aesthetics
 - Socioeconomic Impacts
 - Navigation and Port Facilities
 - Parks and Recreational Opportunities
 - Light
 - Climate and Geology
 - Soils and Farmlands
 - Hazardous Materials and Wastes
 - Hydrology and Water Quality
 - Upland Biotic Communities
 - Aquatic Biotic Communities
- Social Impacts/ Environmental Justice
 - Infrastructure and Services
 - Historic and Archaeological Resources
 - Noise
 - Air Quality
 - Shorelines
 - Floodplains
 - Aquatic Sediments
 - Wetlands
 - Introduced Species
 - Endangered and Threatened Species

Each of these categories involves specific considerations that, as a whole, disclose to the Federal decision makers, and the public, the potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Project and the Federal actions which may be taken in regard to the project. Some of these categories, and examples of the types of issues considered in each category, are summarized as follows:

- Land Use** - Examines the compatibility of existing and planned land uses in the project area and identifies the anticipated effects on these land uses as a result of the project. Of particular interest to this EIS are potential changes in the rate of industrial development in the Cainhoy Peninsula area.
- Social Impacts / Environmental Justice** - Includes potential disruptions of established communities, anticipated relocations of residences and businesses, and changes in future

- population growth. This section also analyzes whether the project would have a disproportionately high adverse effect on the human health and environment of minority and low-income populations.
- Infrastructure and Services** - A comprehensive category that includes issues such as roadways (traffic capacity and traffic safety); rail; water supply and wastewater treatment; stormwater management; law enforcement, fire protection, emergency medical services, and hospitals; schools; solid waste management; hazardous materials management (spill response); and electric, gas, cable, and other utilities. Of particular interest to this EIS are future levels of truck traffic and potential impacts of the proposed rail line on road access to specific neighborhoods.
- Noise** - Analyzes anticipated noise level increases as a result of terminal development and the proposed new rail line associated with the project. Identifies existing noise sources for the noise modeling program. This information is used to determine potential mitigation measures to lessen potential impacts on noise-sensitive areas.
- Historic and Archaeological Resources** - Involves consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 to determine potential adverse effects to historic and archaeological resources. For this project, preliminary discussions indicate that the rail development alternatives have the potential to adversely affect historic properties, including individual buildings and archaeological sites, historic and archaeological districts, and historic landscapes. A proposed Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (PA) has been prepared to address all pertinent aspects of these alternatives.
- Parks and Recreational Opportunities** - Discusses Federal regulations governing potential Section 303(c) and Section 6(f) properties within the project area, as well as neighborhood parks and recreation facilities (including tourism) not covered by these regulations. Section 303(c) protects significant publicly owned parks, recreation areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and other special properties. Section 6(f) ensures that property acquired and developed with assistance from the Land & Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, as amended, is retained and used for public outdoor recreation use.
- Hydrology and Water Quality** - Includes numerous issues such as existing water classifications and standards; hydrogeology of aquifers and confining units in the project area; groundwater quality and quantity; and fresh surface waters, estuarine waters, and ocean waters. Topics of particular interest to this EIS include potential impacts of stormwater runoff from the large paved areas of the proposed terminals and potential impacts on water quality of port operations, including cargo spills and ballast water.
- Endangered and Threatened Species** - Identifies potential impacts to upland and aquatic plants and animals, such as birds, turtles, fish, and mammals, listed as threatened and endangered species by State and Federal agencies.

Continued on Page 5

ALTERNATIVES BEING STUDIED

A critical step in the EIS process is identifying and evaluating reasonable or practicable alternatives to meet the needs intended by the Proposed Project. Since the Proposed Project involves several significant components, the total number of potential alternatives is large. Reasonable locations for developing a marine cargo terminal were identified first, and then alternative surface transportation corridors for each terminal site were identified. The map inside this newsletter shows the various alternatives that are presently under study in the EIS.

Alternative Terminal Development Sites

Based on cargo projections, the South Carolina State Ports Authority (SCSPA) has stated that they need 12,000 feet of additional berths and 1,300 acres of adjacent terminal land by the year 2020, with berths capable of meeting the requirements of the newest generation of larger container vessels. The Corps of Engineers is reviewing the supporting documentation provided by the SCSPA.

The process for identifying alternative terminal development sites began by examining possible terminal sites in other parts of the South Carolina coast and throughout Charleston Harbor. Potential locations for new facilities identified in Charleston Harbor are shown on the map inside this newsletter. Key considerations in the analysis of these sites included navigation access, dredging requirements, available backland, land development constraints, road and rail access, and social and environmental impacts.

Conclusions reached as part of this analysis indicated that:

- None of the existing SCSPA terminals can be expanded because of current land use or constraints;
- Development of a new terminal complex outside of Charleston Harbor would involve unreasonable social and environmental impacts;
- No single site in Charleston Harbor is large enough to provide the number of berths or backland needed by the SCSPA; and
- Many of the alternative sites would not provide reasonable navigation access for the newest generation of container ships, nor a reasonable opportunity for road and rail access.

As a result of the analysis, it was determined that a combination of sites would be required to meet the needs of the SCSPA. The following three possible alternative terminal location combinations have been found to be reasonable

alternatives in terms of the consideration factors and will be evaluated in the EIS:

- The Proposed Project:** Includes the development of new container terminal facilities on the Cooper River and Wando River sides of the 1,300-acre SCSPA property on Daniel Island.
- Naval Base + Daniel Island/Cooper + Columbus Street:** Includes the development of two new container terminal complexes: one at the former Charleston Naval Base and one on the Cooper River side only of the SCSPA property on Daniel Island, along with the conversion of the Columbus Street Terminal to serve very large container vessels.
- Naval Base + Daniel Island/Wando:** Includes development of two new container terminal complexes: one at the former Charleston Naval Base and one on the Wando River side only of the SCSPA property on Daniel Island.
- The EIS will include a full discussion of this alternative location analysis.
- Alternative Surface Transportation Corridors**
- The process of identifying alternative locations for surface transportation corridors was similar to the identification of potential terminal location alternatives. In identifying reasonable alternative surface transportation corridors, key considerations included constructability, operational constraints, construction costs, and potential social and environmental impacts.
- Former Charleston Naval Base**
- Previous planning activities for the former Charleston Naval Base included developing concepts for a marine cargo terminal and intermodal yard at the south end of the property. Two potential corridors were identified for providing a limited-access road connection to I-26 and a new rail connection to the existing rail systems: one at the north end of the terminal and the other at the south end.
- Daniel Island**
- The SCSPA has proposed a road and a rail corridor to connect its property on Daniel Island to I-526 and an existing rail line. The proposed road would widen and extend Cainhoy Road south over Beresford Creek to the SCSPA property. The proposed rail line would extend from the SCSPA property north across Beresford Creek, would cross under I-526 on Thomas Island between the Clements Ferry Road interchange and Clouter Creek, and would extend north on the Cainhoy Peninsula to the East Cooper and Berkeley (EC&B) line serving the Amoco Chemical and Nucor Steel facilities. This route is numbered as Alternative 5 on the map inside this newsletter.

Alternatives - Continued on Page 4